



# Foundation of Michigan

Chairman Melton, Vice Chairman Pavlov, Representative Nathan and Members of the House Standing Committee on Education.....

Thank you for providing the opportunity to discuss “enhanced powers” for emergency financial managers of school districts. My name Dr. KB Stallworth, Chairman & CEO of Utility Services of America; the only Michigan headquartered electric line clearance, construction and disaster response corporation. I founded the company in 1992 and have 150 employees which produced in excess of \$25,000,000 in revenue in 2009. My business is headquartered in Detroit.

I am also am Managing Director of the Black Caucus Foundation of Michigan which is in its 25<sup>th</sup> year of providing public policy research, advocacy and direct service programs.

I come here today joined by former House Speaker Chuck Perricone, whom will begin service as a new member of the Black Caucus Foundation of Michigan’s Board of Directors in February and is a trusted policy confidant. Speaker Perricone was Governor Engler’s legislative lead during the Detroit School Takeover Debate and has a wealth of process experience related this subject.

After we conclude, you will also hear from former House Speaker Rick Johnson regarding his experience with trying to continue the reform. I’ve asked them both to come in an effort to underscore the importance of your work as it particularly relates to the Detroit Public School District, and to provide you with a context for bi-partisan policy deliberations which are:

- historical
- race & class sensitive
- process centered, and
- objective based

First of all I want to ask your patience as I ask you to walk with me down this path which has both treacherous turns and bumps in the road.

As a former House Member from Detroit during the school reform deliberations under the Engler Administration, I helped frame a policy consensus which attempted to provide Michigan families with greater school choice and aggressively move, in Detroit in particular, toward a “site based management delivery model”.

The model contemplated creation of an educational delivery system where school building administrators would have the ability to share or purchase services from within their district, ISD or other local units of government. Thus the individuals whom would

ultimately run school buildings would need to have a skill set which not only included that which is associated with an educator, but the operational business skills of a plant manager. To create this opportunity the Principles and School Administrators Union was abolished.

The path to this model was based in part on the understanding obtained by the Republican Caucus as to the unintentional consequence associated with declaring an entire school district “failing”, and as a consequence every student within it a failure. Students whom excelled in spite of district challenges didn’t deserve an asterisk behind their grade point which could impact college admittance or future employment.....and after fierce public discourse; I dare say all members got it.

Thus as you deliberate the need for an Emergency Manager to have both Financial and Academic Powers, please be mindful of the “land-mine” associated with “labeling and stereo-typing” an entire population.

In regards to the need for language clarity related to the powers of Emergency Financial Managers of School Districts, there should be little question after the recent court decision that an amendment or new statute is needed.

The problem with the waters you find yourself in is that in the statement State Superintendent Flanagan released on December 8, 2008 he stressed that appointing an Emergency Financial Manager was not a state takeover of the school district and the local school board and superintendent still would operate the district’s educational matters.

He said, and I quote; “The Emergency Financial Manager’s role will be to balance the district’s budget, pay bills, manage the spending, and establish strong and reliable financial systems to help the school board make sound academic decisions for students of Detroit.”, unquote.

Thus if enhanced powers are granted.....this body must admit that a takeover is necessary and publicly affirm why....how long....and a path for participation of the elected board.

This will be terribly uncomfortable...and it should be. If you go down this path be assured that there will be some that will say that even though “the takeover” originated with John Engler.....voter disenfranchisement is not a Republican thing.....why?.....because Democrats didn’t want Black folk in Michigan to have a chance to cast a vote for Barrack Obama via a Democratic Primary, now they want to void the participation of Detroit school board members elected less than 60 days ago. Thus to the grass-roots community in Detroit, voter disenfranchisement is neither a Republican thing or a Democratic thing....it is a White thing.

This may very well be one of the most controversial policy decisions of your career.....but it also represents a tremendous opportunity to “in a hot kitchen” help get things right.

This is your quandary....one of how to maintain the trust and confidence of the people you seek to help; and shying away from a decision is not an option because indecision regarding the direction of the legislature and its commitment to see school reform in Detroit completely through, fosters expansion of an environment of uncertainty regarding the future of the entire city.

Now that we have a Mayor.....we need him to stay.....at least long enough to give Detroiters and the world the confidence that stability has finally arrived. The same kind of stability is needed for the Detroit Public School district.

We were very fortunate to be able to attract someone of Mr. Bobb's caliber to grapple with the district's organization, but the stability will come from people knowing what the future holds and the path which must be travelled to get there. That means that the although you must determine what Mr. Bobb needs now to continue the momentum he has begun, what Detroiters need to trust is that you are committed to setting up an oversight process which makes him accountable, and that there will be a permanent governance structure put in place to assure outcome based educational delivery occurs after Mr. Bobb is gone.

I will admit today that I was wrong when I opposed Mayor Archer having control of the Detroit Public School District. I am convinced it was an opportunity missed. My position at the time was to avoid the risk associated with being forced to use General Fund revenue from the City of Detroit's budget rather than force the state to "pony-up" for the cost of school reform which I viewed as their Constitutional mandate. To force greater financial participation for supportive services which foster student educational readiness such as school based health clinics, I felt strongly that the State Treasurer needed to have direct financial responsibility for school reform. In my role as a ranking member on Appropriations dedicated to bringing more and not fewer resources to Detroit, that was a good decision; but from a long-term governance policy perspective, it was the wrong thing to do.....because we are at the same point in the policy debate today.

I revisited how we got there just yesterday with our former Treasurer, Mark Murray who is now President of the Meijer Corporation. I told him I would be sharing this with the Committee because I know there may be some apprehension regarding giving Mayor Bing control of the schools for reasons not limited to uncertainty about his politics or knowledge of local government operations. But we both believe that the legislature cannot solve or even help Detroit, and thus Michigan turn around this perception of a "car with no driver" if you don't commit to a process that has an "end game" attached to it.

Stability will come with people "knowing" who will run the schools, and you can and should frame the path Mr. Bobb should take to get us there.

I cannot underscore the importance of stability. The recent consolidations and mergers of Detroit schools have in some instances weakened some of Detroit's most stable neighborhoods and could have been averted if there was a "requirement for such plans to

be coordinated with the Executive Office of the City of Detroit. In my former legislative district, a very specific social-economic case was made to Mr. Bobb regarding why leadership changes at one of the area high schools, Mumford High was ill-advised. (I have attached a copy of that case for your review). The advice was not heeded, and as predicted.....a rash of violence has occurred at the school and just since September the school has its 4<sup>th</sup> principle. Now a school that was performing, had a demonstrated history of high "quality student" enrollment, and community support...is being viewed as a less attractive education option for parents, thus making residency in the area less attractive as well.

Thus, the potential unintended consequences of school consolidation and closure decisions developed outside of the context of municipal coordination and neighborhood stability policy can stimulate neighborhood decline, require greater police patrol expense, and result in higher truancy. In the case of school closure, utilization or conveyance of the property should be contemplated in advance and you can find our perspective on a process in the Policy Section of our web site.

The language contained within the legislative package you just enacted permits a "surgical" response to a failing school building. This approach mirrors the site based intent so eloquently articulated in the 90's by former New Detroit President William Beckham. Thus, should amendatory language be developed regarding enhanced powers, the Foundation would request that language be drafted restricting the ability of a manager to change operations of a non-failing building; unless there is a coordinated and resource supported effort with the local municipality regarding maintaining or enhancing neighborhood stability.

In addition, the Foundation would also request the Committee consider language which requires a manager to develop and implement a Professional Development Curriculum for school principles to assure that the site based management skill sets to manage school buildings are developed.

As much as you would like to legislate dollars down to the class room, a school cannot be successful if the building manager does not have the skill set to accomplish what is required. While tremendous progress has been made on out-come based teacher accountability. The same attention has not been given to school principles. To Mr. Bobb's credit, the district is requiring more than ever of its principles in their contracts. But as I have highlighted with the case of Mumford High, 4 principles later we still are not certain we have the leadership skill set in the building to restore the stability which was there one year ago.....and there is no process in place to support the current principle in obtaining it.

In closing, I do want to say that in my conversations with the State Superintendents' staff, there was some acknowledgement that there is "just so much capacity" that one person has....meaning there are just so many things that Mr. Bobb can do. The organization of financial operations and management of the school improvement program in Detroit is

daunting. To add academics to it is a substantial request. However, for the record, I do not believe there should be more than one intervener to address any emergency; however at the present time more, and not less focus needs to be given by the legislature to establishing outcome expectations for the Bond Program and the legislature should be very specific in their expectations related to delivery of local economic benefits via Mr. Bobb to Detroit residents prior to introducing a new discussion.

Detroiters deserve a coordinated plan that will pay long term dividends. After just investing 12 million dollars in Redford, McKenzie and Chadsey, all of these schools are now closed....and they represent a mere fraction of the wasted investment. We simply have to get it right this time.

500 million dollars is approximately what former Atlanta Mayor Maynard Jackson had to work with to expand the Atlanta International Airport. He refused to put a shovel in the ground for 2 years until the Georgia legislature reached an agreement with him that African Americans would have substantial contract opportunities in the expansion. The net result was the creation of 30 African American millionaires and an African American business infrastructure in Atlanta that continues to make metropolitan Atlanta one of the most progressive American cities, and among the most desirable places for African Americans to reside and locate businesses.

Nothing is more important in Detroit right now than job creation. Detroit businesses need to be used when practical, and African American businesses need to be used whenever possible. There is no reason to believe that Mr. Bobb would not be committed to this on his own, but the point is....with expanded power should come expanded responsibility and accountability. Rather than allowing for "cover" for decision-making to occur by the assembly of the same cast of characters whom merely want "a piece of the action", the Foundation would recommend that specific goals be outlined and that periodic process and construction site reviews be conducted, and resulting reports be provided to the legislature.

In addition, the Foundation would also encourage the pursuit of an augment to an OCIP program which provides Detroit and minority businesses with the opportunity to secure future surety credit after their participation in the program.

The Foundation would hope that a Detroit-based African American company would be selected as the program manager or that a progressive majority-minority joint venture is encouraged to assure that vertical participation at every level of the program is granted. Short of this we would ask the legislature to include amendatory language that requires an economic development and local business inclusion strategy as part of any school infrastructure construction program.

We also believe that "prompt pay" and "reasonable RFQ response schedule" requirements should be included in any amendatory language to the Act. This specific request has come

to us from the Detroit Chapter of the National Association of Minority Contractors.....  
some of whom have complained about not being paid for work done prior to the start of  
the academic year.

We would ask that a technical assistance organization such as the Michigan Minority  
Business Development Council which performed a similar function during the  
construction of Ford Field, be required to provide independent program monitoring of  
local participation and provide that report to both the Emergency Financial Manager, State  
Superintendent and the legislature.

And finally, we would encourage both formal and informal bi-partisan discussions on the  
complex nuisances of these policy considerations in an effort to demonstrate to Detroiters  
that they can have full confidence in the legislatures commitment to improving rather  
than destroying Detroit's educational product delivery system.

Mr. Chairman that concludes my comments, and I would like for Speaker Perricone to  
comment before any questions.....after which we will attempt to answer any  
questions.....then I would ask the Committee to accept testimony from Speaker Johnson.

Thank You

**To Contact the Foundation:**

Honorable Alma G. Stallworth, PhD.

Founder

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# **Foundation** **of Michigan**

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## *History of the Black Caucus Foundation of Michigan*

Founded by the Honorable Alma G. Stallworth during her tenure in the Michigan Legislature while serving as Chair of the Michigan Legislative Black Caucus; the Foundation was established as a 501-c3 tax exempt organization dedicated to the creation and delivery of service programs which improve the economic circumstances and quality of life for Michigan's African American citizenry. The Foundation's creation evolved from a segment of social-economic and political history which continues to frame the advancement of Black America. At the base of this history was the understanding of a cross section of Black leaders that intellectual resources were needed to support research dedicated to the development and implementation of public policy initiatives critical to the well-being of Black people in America and around the globe.

Prior to 1983, when James J. Blanchard was elected Michigan Governor and Gary Owen was elected Speaker to the Michigan House of Representatives, the only African American staffers at the State Capitol were those working in the offices of Black legislators. During this time there were no African American policy analysts serving on the central policy staff's of the Michigan House or Senate; and with limited exception, only a meager number worked in State agencies, departments or in private sector governmental affairs capacities. Without policy perspectives developed specifically by African Americans; African American legislators, the legislature as a whole and the Executive Branch were limited in both policy perspective and resolution options regarding the challenges facing Michigan's African American community.

In 1984, Representative Stallworth, Senator David Holmes and Senator Jackie Vaughn, III with the assistance of KB Stallworth, a marketing & syndication executive for Scott & Fetzer Corp; and Steve Zimmerman, a senior partner in the law firm of Dykema Gossett; convened a meeting with a cross section of Michigan's most successful and respected African American's to formulate plans for what was to be the newly formed Black Caucus Foundation of Michigan. Among them was Jack Martin, the principle of the most successful African American accounting firm in Michigan; and Dr Karl Gregory, an economist and professor who had successfully created two African American owned financial institutions; Dr. Charles Tucker, one of the nation's most successful sports agents and psychologists; Atty. Richard White, a principle from one of the nations most respected African American law firms; and Don Davis, a renowned music producer and song writer who was also the principle shareholder of Michigan's only African American owned bank. In 1985, these individuals, working in collaboration with the Michigan Legislative Black Caucus, organized the Black Caucus Foundation of Michigan's Legislative Internship Program to serve as a feeder system for African Americans interested in the pursuit of public policy related careers in state government. The program would also serve as a "front-line" research program charged with developing solutions to public policy inequities that affected the black communities of Michigan.

Revolutionary in its design, the internship program provided 12 academic credits to minority students recruited from Michigan State, Wayne State and the University of Michigan for one academic quarter of governmental affairs service, and or submission of a policy paper (with collaboration of a Black legislator) detailing solutions to an issue adversely impacting African Americans. State policies regarding the use of minority contractors, goals of minority procurement, lottery contract expenditure distribution, auto insurance, public and private sector African American appointments, tax reversion, adolescent teen pregnancy, drug and smoking prevention are issues that have all been impacted by Foundation initiatives stimulated by the Intern Program Research.

Today, the Foundations' internship model has been replicated in university systems throughout the nation. Its success in the 1980's has opened the doors for governmental affairs occupations for African American professionals in the legislature, executive branch, fiscal agencies, state departments, and private sector. Now, more than twenty years later, the challenge continues for the Foundation to serve as a critical intellectual link between Michigan policy makers, business leaders, service organizations and the community. There remains a need to frame, refocus and remind decision makers of the critical need for "vertical integration" of African Americans throughout the public policy process to ensure fair and equitable treatment. Nothing exemplifies this need better than the current absence of a single African American in the Capitol Press Corps during a time when media coverage of black experiences and perspectives are essential to improved race relations and equitably addressing Michigan's social and economic woes.

The Foundation is dedicated to the development and implementation of programs and initiatives that effectively address issues such as these. Critical to these endeavors will be continued efforts to educate decision makers, both White and Black, to Michigan's African American political history and advocacy for the Vertical Integration of minorities into business and government operations during the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.



## *A Time-line Perspective Leading To The Creation of The Foundation*

- 1956 Dr. Alfred Thomas, Dr. D.T. Burton and Dr. Lionel Swan lead a Detroit Medical Center Society Collaborative to establish the 1<sup>st</sup> Annual NAACP Fight for Freedom Fund Dinner.
- 1963 Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. leads the Detroit Freedom March.
- 1967 Easter Sunday, Rev. Albert Cleage unveils an 18 foot painting of a Black Madonna and renames Central Congregational Church in Detroit, The Shrine of the Black Madonna, launching the Black Christian National Movement
- 1967 Detroit Police attempt to arrest 82 African Americans attending an after hours party for two returning Viet Nam Veterans resulting in a 5 day riot which leads to 43 people being killed, 1,189 injured and more than 7,000 arrested.
- 1967 President Lyndon Johnson appoints Atty. Damon Keith to the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Michigan.
- 1968 Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King is assassinated on April 4<sup>th</sup>.
- 1968 **Michigan** Congressman John Conyers **introduces legislation to commemorate Dr. Martin Luther King's birthday as a National Holiday.**
- 1968 Gregory Eaton becomes Michigan's first African American multi client lobbyist.
- 1969 **Michigan** Congressman Charles Diggs **organizes the Congressional Black Caucus (CBC).**
- 1971 The CBC makes its' first formal presentation of public policy priorities to a sitting President.
- 1971 The Labor Defense Coalition lead by Attorney Ken Cockrell is organized and begins a successful effort to fight and abolish violent racist undercover police operations.
- 1972 In response to an indifferent White House, Republican and Democratic Parties, **Michigan** Congressman Charles Diggs **organizes a Steering Committee to convene a National Black Political Convention** to develop a Black Agenda to improve the political, social and economic influence and circumstances of African Americans.
- 1972 Senator Coleman A. Young leads a Michigan delegation to the National Black Political Convention convened in Gary, Indiana
- 1973 Robert "Buddy" Battle and Horace Sheffield found a Detroit Chapter of The Coalition of Black Trade Unionists
- 1974 Senator Coleman A. Young is elected Mayor of the City of Detroit
- 1975 Mayor Coleman A. Young calls on Corporate Detroit to create the executive positions of community and civic affairs to improve Interface with City departments, elected officials and the Black community.
- 1976 Representatives Barbara Rose Collins, Raymond Hood and Alma Stallworth meet at the home of Representative Morris Hood, Jr. to organize the Michigan Legislative Black Caucus
- 1977 **Michigan** State Senator David Holmes **organizes the National Black Caucus of State Legislators** and Detroit State Representative Matthew McNeely is elected the organization's first Chairman

- 1978 President Jimmy Carter is elected and affirmative employment, education and contract set-aside "state enabling" public policy provisions are enacted as defensive weapons against social economic obstacles to upward mobility and institutional racism against African Americans
- 1979 **Michigan** State Senator David Holmes **enacts the nations' first state statute mandating contracts to be set aside for minority vendors** (PA 428); but finds implementation difficult without African Americans in strategic decision-making positions throughout state government
- 1983 President Ronald Regan signs legislation declaring February 20th Dr. Martin Luther King' Birthday a National Holiday commencing in 1986.
- 1983 James J. Blanchard commences service as Michigan's governor and Representative Morris Hood, Jr. leads Michigan Legislative Black Caucus effort to elect Representative Gary Owen Speaker of the Michigan House.
- 1983 Michigan House Speaker Gary Owen appoints members of the Legislative Black Caucus to chairmanships of the House Standing Committees on Appropriations, Public Utilities, and Judiciary. They are also are appointed to chair the Appropriations Sub Committees on Transportation, Corrections, Mental Health, General Government, and Higher Education.
- 1984 Ron Russell becomes the first African American on a Michigan legislative agency central staff as an analyst for the House of Representatives Fiscal Agency.
- 1985 Michigan Legislative Black Caucus Chair, Rep. Alma Stallworth, Senator David Holmes, and Senator Jackie Vaughn, III meet with an elite group of African American business professionals and intellectuals to discuss formation of an African centered public policy think tank.

The Black Caucus Foundation of Michigan is organized by Michigan Legislative Black Caucus Chair, Representative Alma G. Stallworth as a tax exempt non profit public policy organization with Don Davis, Chairman of First Independence National Bank as the Chair of the Board of Directors.



Richard White, Jack Martin, Dr. Alma G. Stallworth, Don Davis, Dr. Charles Tucker

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## *Testimony & Request To:*

**Mr. Robert Bobb**  
**Emergency Financial Manager**  
**Detroit Public School District**

**Mumford High School Auditorium**  
**June 9, 2009, 6:00pm**

To Mr. Bobb and staff, and to Principal Spight, Mumford High faculty, my former Mumford and MSU classmate Judge Izetta Bright, my former Guidance Counselor Valerie Proctor, my former Coach, Dwight Jones, to Mother Brumfield of Oak Grove AME Church and Rev. Nicolas Hood of Plymouth Congregational, to DFT President Keith Johnson, parents, students, community leaders and my mother, Representative Alma Stallworth.

I come here this evening as a business owner which operates Michigan's largest electric power line clearance and construction company, Utility Services of America; and as the owner of the largest and oldest minority printing company in Michigan, Mays Printing. Both of which operate just minutes from this building.

I come to you as Mumford High Graduate of the Class of 1974, who has consistently supported this institution physically and financially since my departure.

I come to you as commercial and residential property owner, whose family has resided in this community since 1961, and that has served this community in elected and appointed capacities on the Detroit School Board, Wayne County Commission and the Michigan Legislature for more than 35 years.

I come to you as Managing Director of the Black Caucus Foundation of Michigan; Michigan's oldest and most distinguished African centered public policy think tank, which has managed positive reinforcement programs within the Detroit Public School District for 24 years.

I come to you as the co-author of the "Detroit Public School District Compromised Site Based Management Plan" enacted under the Engler Administration.

A Certified Member



**Michigan Minority  
Business Development Council**  
*Where opportunity meets responsibility*

**But mostly, I come to you humbly .....to request that no final decision is made tonight regarding the future leadership of Mumford High School**

until you have had the opportunity to discuss and deliberate the comments you hear tonight regarding the importance of continuity and stability in the Northwest Detroit Community.

Each neighborhood in the City of Detroit has its on unique legacy. The legacy of Northwest Detroit is a history of stability as:

- 1) home to the city's largest working middle class
- 2) home of the city's largest UAW & DFT populations
- 3) home of the city's largest voter precincts
- 4) home of the city's largest residential tax base

What you would not know from any data you have collected is that this formerly predominate Jewish Community was the key to Detroit's economic stability during and after the massive White flight resulting from the "Great Rebellion of 1967". This community, with Mumford High as the anchor, helped stabilize property values by holding on to, and attracting new taxpaying residents which assured Detroit's survival.

Mumford High and Cass Tech have the richest history of alumni achievement in the Detroit School District. But what may not be evident is that many of those students at Cass Tech, actually also live in the Mumford community; and this "community" is what serves as a major bridge to academic achievement and positive life choices in the city of Detroit. The ability of this institution to impact the quality of life in this community is not dissimilar to the impact of a Marygrove College or Hartford Memorial Baptist Church. But just as with those institutions, it is not the brick and mortar that influence and impact; it is the institutional leadership that drives stability and success.

You would not know that Ms. Spight assumed leadership at Mumford at a time when Northwest Detroit was reeling from the crack cocaine epidemic. Gang violence had swept across the city and into our schools. Under what some would call "war time" circumstances and with less and less financial support from the District, somehow Ms. Spight maintained enrollment above 2,000 students annually and graduation rates in excess of 80% while rebuilding Mumford's academic and athletic programs.

This was no small task; and in regard to the later, I challenge you to find another principle in the district that had enough support from the community to re-build their athletic fields without a single dime from the District !

This accomplishment is but a symbol of her love and commitment to the institution, her students and the Northwest Detroit community.

As a former ranking member of the House Appropriations Committee, I probably know better than anyone else in this room Michigan's challenges with school finance and building infrastructure. Legislators wrangle every session to try to meet their Constitutional mandate to provide access to a quality education with reduced revenue. The Detroit Public School District has a horrible legacy of financial mismanagement. The perception from many in Lansing is that it is unsalvageable. But many felt the same way about Wayne County Community College before Dr. Curtis Ivory's arrival. But with determination and focus WC3D is now recognized as one on the premiere community colleges in the country. We know that with community and stake-holder support and participation, it can be done.

Your efforts to date demonstrate that you have come to the District intent on successfully transforming its image, operations and public confidence. **Your "speedy and focused progress" is a light of encouragement.** But fundamental to your ultimate success is the granting of some consideration of what the community leadership infrastructure is that supports,

or should be supporting a given school; and whether or not a proposed leadership change improves or disrupts an already fragile state of neighborhood stability....which ultimately impacts both quality of life, and academic achievement.

Quite frankly, you could probably remove most principles in the District using AYP as a basis. But the **“truth is powerful”**. **Ms. Spight is as critical to the fabric of this community** as Dr. Fink at Mary Grove, Rev. Adams at Hartford, Dr. Brumfield at Oak Grove and Bishop Ellis at Greater Grace is. **She doesn’t need motivation. All she needs are resources and the support of an informed Superintendent that knows what they are doing; and how to support a principle in removing obstacles to excellence.**

As I confided in you prior to you commencing your assignment at the Black Caucus Foundation Board meeting at Opus One; that there would be no easy decisions associated with achieving successful outcomes; and that change would be difficult, not always well received, but necessary.

I also shared that **the Foundation has no interest in slowing constructive change**; but in fact using our best efforts to support it, as evidenced by the policy brief we provided you with and I’ve attached.

**I come to you today, not in retraction of that position, but to reinforce the importance of “constructive change”.**

Had Governor Engler launched the reform initiative after the proposed “public education/awareness” communications strategy, and after an investment had been made in site based management training of school administrators, we may have succeeded in reform years ago.

Had our former Superintendent taken into consideration how school closure would impact school violence; social work, safe route and mental health strategies could have simultaneously been implemented to avert the kind of senseless violence we experienced at the outset of the school year.

**If a leadership change is necessary here at Mumford in the next school year, which I pray it is not; please consider from the failed lessons learned, .....that a transition plan which provides an increased opportunity to maintain stake-holder support, staff morale and student progress is essential.**

I’d like to make one other critical point. As I shared earlier, Northwest Detroit has a unique role as a “directional driver” of the city’s future. The 2010 Census count is critical to the future finances of both the District and the City. From an opinion leader standpoint, what occurs in the collaboration effort to get not only parents, but our students educated and organized to support a thorough count throughout the city is critical to the city and school district’s financial future.

**Ms. Spight understands her role as a Community Partner and quite frankly, her departure before the 2010 Census Count would represent a significant set-back to stakeholder efforts.**

Having said that, .....we all sincerely appreciate the difficulty of your “District Reform” decision and implementation process. We also know that it must remain, unbiased, impersonal, objective focused and non-political. But we also know that **those empowered to lead have a responsibility to consider a path to success void of anguish, if such a path delivers success within the same required timeline.**

I was effective as a Democratic legislator because of **my willingness to “hear”, and then amend** the positions of my Republican colleagues in a manner which produced a win for them and a win for Detroit. It was just simply good public policy to do so.

If you hear nothing else tonight, please hear that Ms. Spight's leadership is a win for the District and Northwest Detroit. **I humbly ask that no decision be made regarding Mumford's leadership until consideration is given to the comments of the evening and your staff has had an opportunity to provide you with a leadership impact brief.**

Thank you for granting the meeting and an opportunity provide additional context to your decision process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "KB Stallworth". The letters are stylized and cursive.

Honorable KB Stallworth  
Chairman & CEO  
**Utility Services of America**